

Senate Majority Committee Clerks

From: Zvi Flanders <zvi@csi.com>
Sent: Friday, July 8, 2016 2:27 PM
To: The Office of Senator Hertel
Cc: The Office of Senator Jones; The Office of Senator Schuitmaker; The Office of Senator Rocca; The Office of Senator Colbeck; The Office of Senator Bieda; Senate Majority Committee Clerks; The Office of Senator Ananich
Subject: SB 1027 - opposed

Senator Curtis Hertel, Jr., Senator Jim Ananich, and members of the Senate Judiciary Committee:

I am writing to voice my opposition to your Senate Bill 1027, which prohibits a person required to be registered on the Michigan sex offender registry from working at or volunteering for certain organizations.

The purpose of the offender registry was to help law enforcement track those offenders who pose a danger to society. Unfortunately, the registry has become catch-all for the false promise of public safety. For instance, the registry does not discern someone's level dangerousness and risk to reoffend. For instance, the registry does not discern someone's level dangerousness and risk to reoffend.

Michigan's registry has become the 4th largest in the country because it includes such a wide range of crimes, including minor infractions, and our registry laws allow virtually no opportunity to be considered for removal based on one's continued clean record.

Michigan's sex offender laws were not established out of evidence-based data. Over the years, our sex offender laws have proven to be a failed experiment. There have been numerous studies since the registry was created and the mountains of evidence consistently show that recidivism rates for sex offenders are among the lowest for all criminal offenses - averaging 3.1 percent.

With 40,000 listed offenders and 200 new listings every month, this legislation affects a growing number of people regardless of their offense, their rehabilitation status, and their risk of re-offense.

Your legislation would ban an entire population based on a sweeping generalization of an inaccurate and disproved perception of registrants. It is too broad.

This legislation does nothing but offer a false sense of security; we should focus proven evidence-based interventions that offer true public safety. Requirements for the registry should not be driven by fear.

Public safety is not served when we continually block an individual's re-entry into society by creating insurmountable barriers and obstacles.

Finally, service work, volunteering, provides a means for ex-felons to give back to the community and gain employment experience at the same time.

Our lawmakers should investigate evidence-based research to effectively reform our Sex Offender Registration Act so that it actually accomplishes its intended purpose to increase public safety. Until then, I urge you to withdraw this legislation.

Respectfully,

Zvi Flanders
6297 Blue Heron Ct
Ann Arbor, MI 48108

c Senator Rebekah Warren
 Representative Adam Zemke

Senate Majority Committee Clerks

From: Zvi Flanders <zvi@csi.com>
Sent: Monday, July 11, 2016 8:00 AM
To: The Office of Senator Hertel
Cc: The Office of Senator Jones; The Office of Senator Schuitmaker; The Office of Senator Rocca; The Office of Senator Colbeck; The Office of Senator Bieda; Senate Majority Committee Clerks; The Office of Senator Ananich
Subject: SB 1027 - opposed

Senator Curtis Hertel, Jr., Senator Jim Ananich, and members of the Senate Judiciary Committee:

I am writing a second time in opposition to your Senate Bill 2013. I would like to add to my earlier thoughts.

The language makes it nearly impossible for registered sex offenders to work or volunteer anywhere at all. I don't believe this is the result you are looking for.

Perhaps if the language were modified to specify that prevent sex offenders from working or volunteering at clinics that serve victims of sexual assault or violence.

Our lawmakers should investigate evidence-based research to effectively reform our Sex Offender Registration Act so that it actually accomplishes its intended purpose to increase public safety. Until then, I urge you to withdraw this legislation.

Respectfully,

Zvi Flanders
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Ann Arbor, MI 48108

